A UNIQUE COLLECTION OF TWO *RHANTUS WALLISI* IN THE BODY CAVITY OF A FEMALE *DYTISCUS ALASKANUS* (COLEOPTERA: DYTISCIDAE).[1]

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As part of a study on the reproductive biology of *Dytiscus alaskanus* (J. Balfour-Browne), we collected aquatic beetles every week in floating bottle traps (Aiken and Roughley, in press) from George Lake, Alberta 55°55'N, 114°05'W). *D. alaskanus* specimens were taken alive to the lab, killed in 70% ethanol and then the abdominal cavity injected with 70% ethanol to preserve the reproductive organs. While dissecting a female *D. alaskanus* collected in early June, we discovered two specimens of *Rhantus wallisi* (Hatch) in the abdominal cavity of the female *D. alaskanus*. The internal organs of the *D. alaskanus* female were gone except for a few muscle fibres. The female *D. alaskanus* was of average size for the species (total length = 2.56 cm).

The two specimens of *Rhantus* had apparently entered the body cavity of the *D. alaskanus* female at the intersegmental membrane between the last tergite and the genital capsule. In this area, there are numerous scallop-shaped bite marks along the posterior edge of the tergite. The most reasonable hypothesis is that the *Rhantus* probably attacked the *D. alaskanus* female when she was alive (we took only *D. alaskanus* from the lake and were careful to preserve only live animals) but weakened or injured. This concurs with other observations (Johnson and Jackinovich, 1970) that much of the diet of these 'predaceous' beetles is dead animal matter. Because of the methods of collecting and preserving, we are certain this attack occurred in the field. The confinment of the beetles in bottle traps for up to two days raised the probability of this occurring by bringing the two species in close and repeated contact.

LITERATURE CITED

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Johnson, G.H. and W. Jackinovich, 1970. Feeding behavior of the predaceous diving beetle *Cybister fimbriolatus fimbriolatus* (Say) (Col., Dytiscidae), BioScience 20:1111.

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Fig. 1. Two *Rhantus wallisi* in the body cavity of a *D. alaskanus* female.